

**QUESTIONS FOR APPOINTEES TO THE NORTHERN MICHIGAN
UNIVERSITY BOARD OF CONTROL**

1. What goals would you like to accomplish during your time on the board?
2. Over the last 15 or 20 years it seems that all state universities have been expanding programs to try to offer everything to everyone. Do you think this is a good idea?
3. Please describe the conditions that would have to exist before you would vote to increase tuition?
4. Governor Granholm recently proposed giving additional funds from the federal economic stimulus package to universities and community colleges that hold the line on tuition. Do you support this proposal?
5. If Northern Michigan University is facing a budget deficit, what areas would you look to first to make cuts? Please list several areas where the University has already made cuts or become more efficient.
6. Capital outlay projects for universities require a 25% match before getting funds from the state for building projects. In these tough economic times, do you think a university should be spending money on building projects rather than using that money to hold down tuition rates?
7. What type of outcomes should the university measure to determine if it is being successful?
8. What is your position on the importance of state universities as authorizers of charter public schools?
9. In which areas of technological research does your university specialize? How effective is your school at commercializing this research to help grow the state's economy?
10. Do you think that K-12 institutions are doing a good job of preparing students for college? Why?

Questions for Appointees to the Northern Michigan University Board of Control

Responded by H. Sook Wilkinson, Ph.D.
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1. What goals would you like to accomplish during your time on the board?

I'd like to help promote NMU regionally and internationally.

I will work in favor of "quality, accessibility, and affordability" as continued top priorities of the university.

2. Over the last 15 or 20 years it seems that all state universities have been expanding programs to try to offer everything to everyone. Do you think this is a good idea?

Considering the location of the university, I think it's important for NMU to be responsive to the needs of the people in the U.P., as determined by letters from citizens, voter initiatives, town hall meetings, and so on. NMU is only one of three universities operating a community college in Michigan. Community colleges have become more important than ever to train people for a variety of technical skills.

Having said that, it is also a smart strategy to find a niche and position the school to stand out among its peers.

3. Please describe the conditions that would have to exist before you would vote to increase tuition.

Currently, NMU's undergraduate tuition cost is the second lowest among the 15 public universities. The board and the university administration will do everything we can to maintain the current tuition rate.

4. Gov. Granholm recently proposed giving additional funds from the federal economic stimulus package to universities and community colleges that hold the line on tuition. Do you support this proposal?

Yes. Just like the universities, the State can no longer be all things to all people. In making priorities, I would place the education of its citizens at the

top of any list, right along with law enforcement and health care. I share the Governor's concern about making college education accessible and affordable.

5. If NMU is facing a budget deficit, what areas would you look to first to make cuts? Please list several areas where the University has already made cuts or become more efficient.

I understand that NMU leadership has been working diligently to cut costs and operate the university more efficiently. They have utilized technology to create paperless processing of salaries, student grades, business transactions with students, and so on. They have looked for any duplication of personnel and services. They have been particularly interested in the costs of heating – a big problem in the U.P.

There may be other areas where the university can become even more efficient. NMU can consider outsourcing some of the services without sacrifice. An example is the use of Marquette General Hospital for the medical care of the students. I understand some partnership exists already but it'd be worthwhile to consider expanding it.

6. Capital outlay projects for universities require a 25% match before getting funds from the state for building projects. In these tough economic times, do you think a university should be spending money on building projects rather than using that money to hold down tuition rates?

No. This is no time to expand construction unless the project can be shown to pay for itself. It is always wise for the state to protect its investment in existing buildings, however.

7. What type of outcomes should the university measure to determine if it is being successful?

Some of the obvious ones are standardized tests, graduation rates, success in entering graduate school, and other measurable yardsticks. The accreditation process mainly examines "process" rather than outcomes but is useful in making sure there are enough resources available to produce a good educational outcome. There must be ways to get feedback from graduates about the quality of their education, their success in getting jobs, and the like.

8. What is your position on the importance of state universities as authorizers of charter public schools?

Although charter schools may take funds away from other public schools, parents deserve a choice about where they want their children educated. In certain locales, such as reservations for native Americans, charter schools may offer real advantages.

9. In which areas of technological research does your university specialize? How effective is your school at commercializing this research to help grow the state's economy?

NMU is not a research university with doctorate programs, and therefore it does not have a lot of product research. However, they do contribute to the state's economy through technology testing services for Motorola and Intel, as an example. Their art and design students have produced some products that are of commercial value. Their biggest contribution is producing creative and independent thinking students.

I do hope that the university can find more ways to help grow the state's economy in the future.

10. Do you think that K-12 institutions are doing a good job of preparing students for college? Why?

Yes and no. The answer probably depends on which school districts we are talking about. As an Asian-American, I was brought up with an appreciation of the value of education. It seems clear to me that a top-notch educational system is going to be the key to a successful state and a successful country.